



The Presentation of the Lord: A Kairos Moment

By Fr. Tom Rosica

When Mary and Joseph arrived at Jerusalem's Temple, with the Child Jesus in their arms, it was not just one more ordinary moment in the life of an old priest and a faithful prophetess on duty that day. It was the divinely appointed moment. Ordinary time "chronos" was suddenly transformed into "the moment from God." Because we live in this very same kairos, the "appointed time and hour" of our history, we cannot speak of the future of the Church, the future of our parish community, the future of our dioceses and religious congregations,, the future of our activities of education and evangelization, indeed the future of anything! The only real issue for us is Jesus and the future of the Church, Jesus and the future of our parish community, Jesus and the future of our dioceses and religious communities, Jesus and the future of our educational and pastoral programs and activities, Jesus and the future of everything! Too often our look at the future is purely scientific or sociological, with no reference to Jesus, the Gospel or the action of the Spirit in history and in the church.

On this special day when we give thanks to God for the Consecrated Life, we must ask ourselves some significant questions. Why do some of our contemporaries - brothers and sisters in religious life - see and find Christ, while others do not? What opens the eyes and the heart? What is lacking in those who remain indifferent? Does our self-assurance, the claim to knowing reality, the presumption of having formulated a definitive judgment on everything not close us off and make our hearts insensitive to the newness of God? How often are we dead certain of the idea that we have formed of the world, of the Church, of the consecrated life, and no longer let ourselves be involved in the curiosity and intimacy of an adventure with God who wants to meet us and draw us closer to Him?

How frequently do we place our confidence in ourselves rather than in the Child of Bethlehem, and we do not think it possible that God could be so great as to make himself small so as to come really close to us? How could it be that God's glory and power are revealed in a helpless Baby?

The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, and the carefully chosen words of Simeon's prayer invite us into contemplation and adoration of the Word made

flesh, dwelling powerfully among us. We all lead busy lives. We do important, good works. Many of our lives are deeply enmeshed with the institutions and enterprises we serve. At times are we not so caught up with the comings and goings of so many people in our daily existence, that we forget to notice Jesus in our midst?

Jesus, who comes to us in the distressing disguise of the poor, the unbalanced, the angry, sad and confused people who make up our worlds? Jesus, who comes to us from very simple, humble, holy parents who cannot do anything for us, except simply to be there? Could it be that we, consecrated women and men, like those in Jerusalem's temple, are incapable of recognizing the signs of the new and special presence of the Messiah and Saviour? And when we do encounter the radical newness that is Jesus, will we hold the baby in our arms, welcome him, make room for him in our lives? Will the 'newness' he brings really enter into our lives or will we try to put the old and the new together hoping that the newness of God will cause us minimum disturbance?

How do we see God's glory in our lives? Do we thirst for justice and peace? What are the new situations and who are the new people who have entered our lives in the last little while? What new realities are we avoiding or afraid of or rebelling against? How are we truly light and salvation for other people? Are we capable of warming human hearts by our lives? Do we radiate joy or announce despair? Do we live the Gospel of joy? I conclude with the striking words of a great theologian and teacher of the second century, Origen (185-223). They are from his homily on Luke's account of the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple:

"Simeon knew that no one could release a man from the prison of the body with hope of life to come, except the one whom he enfolded in his arms. Hence, he also says to him, "Now you dismiss your servant, Lord, in peace" (Lk 8,44). For, as long as I did not hold Christ, as long as my arms did not enfold him, I was imprisoned, and unable to escape from my bounds. But this is true not only of Simeon, but of the whole human race. Anyone who departs from this world, anyone who is released from prison and the house of those in chains, to go forth and reign, should take Jesus in his hands. He should enfold him with his arms, and fully grasp him in his bosom. Then he will be able to go in joy where he longs to go... "

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MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm
(Anticipated Mass)
Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm
Monday – Wednesday 8am
Thursday Mass/Novena:
8am & 7pm
Friday, Saturday, Holidays:
9am
(Fridays in July & August:
8am)
Reconciliation
Saturday: 4-4:45pm
Adoration
Saturday 9:30-10am
Library Hours
Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

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Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.

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January 28, 2018

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Great to be home... back to parish business!

Dear Friends & Parishioners,

It was lovely to be home and with my family after two years of being away. Of course, as my parents are getting on with age, they are beset with health issues. I was very blessed to be back with them, praying for them. I hope my presence was a source of comfort for them.

The Redemptorist Associates is a lay group of people that meet regularly for faith-sharing and ongoing formation in areas of Redemptorist Charism and spirituality, and share in some aspect of the Redemptorist Mission. They are actively working to promote the work of Redemptorists here and elsewhere. I look forward to having our lay associates grow in faith and understanding of the work of the Redemptorist order.

You will have noticed by now that the Parish Lenten Mission is on the calendar. Some of you would know Fr Ray Douziech who has helped us out at Masses in the past. We look forward to welcoming him as the speaker for this year's mission. Please note the dates of the Parish Mission and make yourself available on those evenings. It would be a wonderful way to prepare for Easter. Have a blessed week!

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R

Mission Prayer

Glory to you, O God for all seasons!
Your love calls us to be your people.
By sharing our many and diverse gifts
we share in your mission.

We ask you, Lord, to shape us into a
community of mercy. Nourish us by your
Word and Sacraments, that we may grow
in the image of Jesus.

Through the power of your Holy Spirit,
and the blessings of our Parish Mission,
heal us that we, in turn, may heal the
wounded. Form us to be instruments of
mercy, justice and peace in our world.
Give us the courage to take up our crosses
and follow your son, Jesus,
and then send us out to proclaim your
merciful love.
Amen.



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish
Lenten Mission 2018



O that today you would listen to the voice of the Lord. Do not harden your hearts! – Psalm 95

NEWS & NOTICES

Craft Group: Do you like to knit, crochet or sew? The Craft gals are inviting you to join them Tuesday mornings 10 -12 in the Madonna Room. They contributed over \$2000 this year to the Charities the CWL supports. You wouldn't need to come every week if that is too great a commitment, just come and see if you'd like to.

Join the Choir: Scripture often tells us to sing to the Lord in gladness. There is also that oft-quoted line of St. Augustine "He who sings, prays twice." So, if you like to sing and can carry a tune, come and be part of a fulfilling experience with the OLPH choir. Rehearsals are on Mondays 7-8pm in the church. Please contact Catherine Walsh: catherine.organist@gmail.com for more information.

Youth Safety Awareness Workshop: Learn martial arts and physical safety that combines combative arts and psychology developed by instructor Robert Lynds of Dojang. It is a discipline which enhances your body, mind and soul. All teenagers welcome. This is a Youth Ministry sponsored event for OLPH church and school youth. No charge for attendees. Dates for this two-session workshop are Sat Feb 17 and Sat Feb 24. Time: 3:30pm - 4:30pm. Workshop is at Dojang at West 4th and Blenheim. For more details email Theresa: olphyouthmin@gmail.com.

Third Annual Ordinandi Dinner: Join Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, Bishop Stephen Jensen of Prince George, and members of the Catholic faithful as we gather together in support of the men who are soon to be ordained ("ordinandi") to the priesthood. Meet your future priests: Deacon Guy Zidago, who will be ordained for the Archdiocese of Vancouver, and Deacon Ken Anderson, who will be ordained for the Diocese of Prince George. Join us on Wednesday, Feb. 7, at the Italian Cultural Centre, 3075 Slocan Street, Vancouver. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Dinner begins promptly at 6:30 p.m. Cost: \$50 (Student rate: \$25). You can also sponsor a priest or seminarian. To register or for more info on how to sponsor a priest or seminarian, visit vocationsvancouver.ca.

B.C. Catholic Collection: February is Catholic Press Month and with it comes the annual Catholic Press Collection. On the weekend of Feb. 3/4, there will be a second collection at all parishes in the Archdiocese of Vancouver. This is a great opportunity for parishioners to show their appreciation for receiving The B.C. Catholic. The collection helps defray your parish's costs of mailing the newspaper to parishioners. For those who don't receive it, it's also a great chance to help out as all the money collected stays in the parish. Please give generously this weekend so we can continue to deliver to parishioners in the Archdiocese of Vancouver this vital, award-winning publication. Visit www.bccatholic.ca for more info on the Catholic Press Collection and the Catholic Press Association.

World Day for Consecrated Life: In 1997, Pope Saint John Paul II instituted a day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life. This year the World Day for Consecrated Life will be celebrated at St. Patrick's Church, Vancouver, on Friday, Feb. 2 at 7 p.m. Please come and join the Archbishop and the Consecrated Religious for Mass. All are welcome. Reserved seating and more information are available at 604-683-0281.

Pro-life Mass and Prayer Vigil: Join us for a peaceful, prayerful vigil for unborn children and their parents on Saturday, Feb. 3. Mass is at 9 a.m. at Blessed Sacrament, Vancouver, followed by the Rosary at B.C. Women's Hospital, Vancouver.

DECEMBER COLLECTION: THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

	JANUARY
Sunday Offering	\$49,489.65
Collection for the Needy	\$2,090.20
Icon of Love Scholarship Fund	\$805.00
Home Missions	\$35.00
Archdiocesan Youth Ministry Collection	\$1,664.45
Christmas Offering	\$13,018.61
Evangelization of the Nations (World Mission Sunday)	\$20.00

Stewardship Reflection

"Brothers and sisters: I should like you to be free of anxieties." - 1 Corinthians 7:32

How much anxiety do we bring upon ourselves by constantly worrying about not having enough or attaining more things? God won't necessarily give you everything you want, but He will provide everything you need. Try this – use the word "pray" instead of the word "worry" in the future.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

One Conference



One Conference - Mercy & Beyond: Sharing our Joy

The annual ONE Conference brings together 1,000 parish and ministry leaders from across Catholic Vancouver to connect, learn, and inspire each other. Mercy and Beyond: Sharing our Joy is the theme of the 2018 ONE Conference.

Fr. James Mallon (author of *Divine Renovation*) and Dr. Josephine Lombardi are our keynote speakers, and we will hear practical tips from breakout session speakers Jake Khym, Dr. Deborah MacNamara, Abbott John Braganza, OSB, and Brett Powell about sharing our joy within our parish, our families, and our friends in the greater Church community.

Join us Saturday, Feb. 10, from 9-5:30 p.m. at Chandos Patterson Auditorium at Pacific Academy in Surrey. Tickets are \$45 and include a box lunch. Register today at onecatholic.ca.

Door Is Open

The next Door is Open is on Tuesday February 6. About 20 volunteers were needed. Sign-up sheets for this month have already been filled. If you are interested in volunteering for this outreach opportunity, the group is booked to help out at this downtown Eastside facility on the first Tuesday of every month. Look out for the next call!

CATHOLIC TRADITION: BLESSING OF THROATS

The Feast of St. Blaise

By Fr. William Saunders

This Saturday Feb 3 is the feast of St Blaise. It may seem like a curious tradition to some but it is true that on this day, if you wish you may have your throat blessed. The blessing of throats will be administered at our parish this Saturday at the 9am Mass.

Unfortunately, what is known about the life of St. Blaise derives from various traditions. His feast day is celebrated in the East on Feb. 11 and in the West on Feb. 3 (although it was observed on Feb. 15 until the 11th century). All sources agree that St. Blaise was the Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia who suffered martyrdom under Licinius about AD 316. (Remember that Emperor Constantine had legalized the practice of Christianity in 313, but Licinius, his ally and co-emperor who had concurred in legalizing Christianity, betrayed him and began persecuting the Church. Constantine defeated Licinius in 324.) From here, we rely on the tradition which has been associated with our liturgical celebrations over the centuries, which does not necessarily preempt their veracity or accuracy.

In accord with various traditions, St. Blaise was born to rich and noble parents, and received a Christian education. He was a physician before being consecrated a bishop at a young age. Although such a statement seems terse, keep in mind that at that time the local community usually nominated a man to be a bishop based on his outstanding holiness and leadership qualities; he in turn was then examined and consecrated by other bishops with the approval of the Holy Father. Therefore, St. Blaise must have been a great witness of our Faith, to say the least. During the persecution of Licinius, St. Blaise, receiving some divine command, moved from the town, and lived as a hermit in a cave. Wild animals visited, and he healed any that were sick and wounded. One day, a group of hunters gathering wild beasts for the game in the amphitheater discovered St. Blaise and seized him. As he was being taken to the governor Agricolaus, the governor of Cappadocia and Lesser Armenia, St. Blaise encountered a woman whose pig was being seized by a wolf; St. Blaise commanded the wolf to release the pig, and it was freed unhurt.

While in prison, he miraculously cured a small boy who was choking to death on a fishbone lodged in his throat. Also, the woman whose pig had been saved brought St. Blaise candles so that his cell would have light and he could read the sacred Scriptures.

Eventually, Agricolaus condemned St. Blaise for upholding his Christian faith rather than apostatizing. He was tortured with the iron comb (an instrument designed for combing wool but was used here for shredding the skin) and finally beheaded. By the sixth century, St. Blaise's intercession was invoked for diseases of the throat in the East. As early as the eighth century, records attest to the veneration of St Blaise in Europe, and he became one of the most popular saints in the spiritual life of the Middle Ages. Many altars were dedicated to his honor, and even the Abbey of St. Blaise in southern Germany claimed to have some of his relics.



St. Blaise is also venerated as one of the "Fourteen Holy Helpers," a group of saints invoked as early as the 12th century in Germany and who are honored on Aug. 8: St. Denis of Paris (headache and rabies), St. Erasmus or Elmo (colic and cramp), St. Blaise (throat ailments), St. Barbara (lightning, fire, explosion and sudden and unprepared death), St. Margaret (possession and pregnancy), St. Catherine of Alexandria (philosophers and students, and wheelwrights), St. George (protector of soldiers), Sts. Achatius and Eustace (hunters), St. Pantaleon (tuberculosis), St. Giles (epilepsy, insanity, and sterility), St. Cyriac (demonic possession), St. Vitus (epilepsy), and St. Christopher (travelers). The German Dominicans promoted this veneraion, particularly at the Church of St. Blaise in Regensburg (c. 1320).

One reason for St. Blaise's popularity arose from the fact he was a physician who cured, even performing miraculous cures. Thereby, those who were sick, especially with throat ailments, invoked his intercession. Eventually the custom of the blessing of throats arose, whereby the priest held two crossed candles over the heads of the faithful or touched their throats with them while he invoked the prayer of the saint and imparted God's blessing. In our present Roman Ritual, the priest prays, "Through the intercession of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." This practice continues in many parishes on St. Blaise's feast day.

While we invoke St. Blaise for his protection against any physical ailment of the throat, we should also ask for protection against any spiritual ailment — profanity, cursing, unkind remarks, detraction or gossip. St. James reminds us, "If a man who does not control his tongue imagines that he is devout, he is self-deceived; his worship is pointless" (1:26) and further in the text, "We use [the tongue] to say, Praised be the Lord and Father"; then we use it to curse men, though they are made in the likeness of God. Blessing and curse come out of the same mouth. This ought not to be, my brothers!" (3:9-10). Therefore, may St. Blaise protect us from all evil, physical and spiritual, which may attack the throat.

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